Numb. 92.

THE OBSERVATOR.

the Talk of the Town concerning Her Majesties Proclamation, &c. Of Her Majesties Proclamation allowing a longer Time for the Deserters to enter themselves on Board the Ships of War. Of the New Commission for Greenwich *Hospital.*

From Saturday March the 6th, to Wednesday March the 10th, 170⅘.

HOnest *Country-man*, You are Welcome from *London*. You have had very fine Weather this Journey. The Heavens Smile on Us, and We have favourable Seasons, when other Countries are afflicted with Famine, Pestilence and Earthquakes: I hope the Publick-Affairs look with as pleasant an Aspect as does the Season of the Year.

Country-m. I am not so good a Judge of One or the Other; but I'll assure you, Sir, the fine folk at *London* are variously Afflicted, some with Distempers in one end, and some in t'other, but most of 'em I think have the Rickets in their Understandings, and never know when they are well, and fall out with the Government as they do with their Wits, who lie under an Impossibility of pleasing their Capricious Humours and Idle-Fancies. Many of them are much Angry at the Queens Proclamation against *Vice*, *Prophaness* and *Debauchery*, especially the *Vintners*, and more especially their Wives, some of which, had the Profits of the *Sundays* Claret to buy 'em Pinns; and to enable 'em ever now and then to take a Turn with the Wine Merchants Eldest Prentice to *Cupids-Garden*, or on Board the *Folly*; the Whetters are very much disoblig'd at this Proclamation, who us'd on *Sundays* to meet on their Parade at the *Quakers-Meeting-House* in *Gracechurch-Street*, and adjourn from thence thro' the Tavern Back-door to take a Whet of *White* and *Wormwood*, and to Eat a Bit of the *Cook-Maids Dumplin*, and then Home to Dinner with their Dear Spouses, and afterwards return to the Tavern to take a Flask or two for Digestion; they tell me all the *Cake-Houses* at *Islington*, *Stepney*, and the Suburbane Villages have hung their Signs in Mourning; every little Kennel of Debauchery is quite dismantled by this Proclamation; and the Beaus, who sit at Home on *Sundays*, and Play at Picquet and *Back-Gammon*, are under dreadful Apprehensions of a Thundering Prohibition of Stage-Playing.

Obs. That would Pin the Basket. For those Nurseries of *Vice*, the *Play-Houses*, do more Mischief to the Souls of Young People, to their Parents Estates, and their own Fortunes, than (for ought I know) all the other Means of Lewdness practised in that Town: But should Her Majesty issue such a Proclamation, she would be presently Branded for a Presbyterian, as was Her Pious and Vertuous Sister, the late Queen *Mary* of Blessed Memory, for no other Reason, than that she was not a common Frequenter of Play-houses: And what do all their Calumnies now signifie, to that Saint in Heaven? She is out of their Reach, and Her Memory is Precious to all the Lovers of Vertue: And what do all the Clamours of the Debauchees of the Age signify to our Queen? In Her Punishing of Vice, and Encouraging of Vertue, She has acted the Part of a Christian Princess, and like the Head of a truly Protestant Body the Church of *England*; nor does she Impose rigorous Austerities on others, and prescribe Rules of Vertue which She is unwilling to follow Her Self: But She leads Her People in the Paths of Righteousness, as Her Glorious Predecessor *William* led the Armies of the Allies, in Defence of the Protestant Religion, the Liberties of *England*, and the Common Safety of *Europe*: Her Pious Example is more Instructive to Ingenuous and Candid Spirits, than the Penalties of the Laws mentioned in Her Proclamation: But what Her Pious Example, and Gentle Admonitions cannot Effect, the Rigour and Severity of the Law must Perform; too much Lenity is more the Effect of good Nature, than of Prudence; especially in Cases like this, wherein Severity is the Indispensible Duty of a Regent Prince or Princess: We have too many in *England*, and those of the Gown too, who make a stir about *Religion*, and advance the *Invidious* Notions of *High-Church* and *Low-Church*, and prescribe Rules to the Executive Power, how to Ruine *Dissenters*, who sit regardless of the sinking State of Christianity, and cannot afford Us One Sermon or Tract in Defence of the *Christian Religion*, in Opposition to the Immorality and *Prophaness*, which has taken such deep Footing in our Unfortunate-Island: When shall we see the Day wherein these Men will Address Her Majesty for Her great Care of *Religion*, by Her Recommending hereof from the Throne, and by Her repeated Proclamations against *Vice*, *Prophaness*, and *Debauchery*? These (tho' the most Pious Actions of a *Religious* Queen) are over-look'd by these Men, who pretend the greatest Zeal for the Church, tho' their Actions openly declare they hate the Peace of our *Israel*, that they are Sons of *Violence* and *Oppression*, and disturb the Peaceable Waters of the Church, to make a ferment in the State. Can you tell me, Sir, why, we have had such a Noise of late against Protestant *Dissenters*, who agree in Essentials with the *Church of England*, and not one Word uttered by that Party against Papists, whose Priests never appeared more in Publick in *England*, than at this Juncture? We may Judge of the Designs of these Men by their Writings and Practice: And from their Evil Devices against our Church and State, and the Succession of the

the Crown, as by Law Eſtabliſhed, *Good Lord Deliver Us.*

Country-m. Maſter *Obſervator*, There is another Proclamation Publiſhed at *London*, allowing a longer Time for the Deſerters from Her Majeſties Ships of War, and the *Marine* Regiments, to repair to their Reſpective Ships, and the Proclamation ſays, That One *William Gray*, belonging to the *Ipſwich* was Try'd and found Guilty by a *Court-Martial* holden at *Spit-Head*, but that the ſaid *Gray* is Pardoned thro' the Interceſſion of His Royal Highneſs to the Queen: I am very glad to find that His Royal Highneſs is a Prince of ſuch tender Compaſſion, and that One of ſo good a Temper preſides in the Admiralty. I am much affraid, Sir, That ſome, who have had that Management in the Late Reign, have been the occaſion of the Deſertion of ſo many of our Sailors, their Barbarous Treatment of *Whipping*, and *Pickling*, by the Diſcretionary Power of Commanders much inferior to themſelves, in Courage and Skill, together with their bad Pay and Proviſions, has been a great occaſion of their leaving the Nations Service.

Obſ. I am by Experience fully ſatisfy'd of what you ſay, and do verily believe, that if ſome Methods were taken to aſſure the Sailors, that they ſhould be better Uſed, Paid, and Victualled for the future, they would readily enter themſelves into the Service; but to be Hang'd if they don't come In, or to be Poyſon'd by bad Proviſions if they do come In, as has been their Fate in former times, will cauſe a Heſitation among Men, who know how to get their Living in any part of the World: It may ſeem a piece of Impudence in a Private Perſon to preſcribe Rules to the Wiſdom of the Admiralty; tho' the ſafety of the *Engliſh* Navy, is every *Engliſh* Mans Care, as it is the chief Defence of our Country. Yet I humbly preſume that if a General Indempnity or Pardon, were Iſſued for all ſuch Seamen or Marriners, as have turned Pirates at *Madagaſcar* in the *Perſian* Gulph, and *Eaſt-Indies*, as alſo in the *South-Seas*, and parts of *America*, &c. upon Condition that they enter themſelves on Board Her Majeſties Ships of War. I do verily believe, this would be one means of ſupplying the *Engliſh* Navy with Men; and as theſe are the very flower of our Sailors, ſo by their being ſo long Abroad in various Climates, they will be the beſt Men to ſerve in Foreign Expeditions: Miſtake me not. I don't Plead for *Pyrates* nor *Piracy*. But would make the moſt Stubborn and Rough Stones Serviceable in our National Walls; and not one ſort of Men have we in *England*, but by Management and Cultivation may be made Serviceable to the *Common-wealth?*

Country-m. Pray, Mr. *Obſervator*, of what Uſe can the *Jacobites* be to the Common-wealth. I proteſt I can't tell, unleſs you Hang them up *in Terrorem* as Examples to others. But ſince you are ſpeaking of encouraging Seamen and Marriners, it brings to my Mind what you once diſcourſed of the Encouragement of *Greenwich* Hoſpital, and of a Liſt of the Commiſſioners of that Hoſpital, which I have got in my Pocket, and which an Honeſt Gentleman told me would paſs, and ſent it you for your Peruſal. Pray your Opinion of it.

Obſ. This Liſt is certainly the ſame which was ſaid to be given in by my Lord *Van Hum*, and I'll aſſure thee, Honeſt Country-man, His Royal Highneſs is provided with better Council than to let the Queen be impoſed upon by the Partizans of that Hoſpital, there are many Objections may be made againſt this Liſt, but chiefly that ſeveral Perſons are Named in it, that are Officers, and do receive Sallaries in that Hoſpital; which is a thing altogether impracticable, for how can the ſame Perſon be a Maſter and Servant at the ſame time? By their being Commiſſioners they Audit their own Accounts as they are Officers, which is a thing contrary to Reaſon and the uſual Methods of Accounting. There had been no occaſion of a Bill to oblige Mr. *Whittacre* to account, if he had been his own Auditor; but the Partizans of that Hoſpital are ſo notoriouſly Guilty, that they have no way to ſave themſelves but by getting a Commiſſion for their Turn, which if they cannot Effect (as I am ſatisfied they will not) you will find ſome of thoſe fine Birds turn'd into Scare-Crows, when they are diſplum'd of their Borrowed Feathers. And when the Queſtion ſhall be put, By what Authority they have Acted in receiving and paying of Money, *&c.* ſince the Expiration of the laſt Commiſſion? It muſt be anſwered by more Intereſt than Reaſon, or elſe ſome People are in a bad condition; and when the Management of that Hoſpital ſhall fall under the Inſpection of Juſt Judges, you'll find more Faults diſcovered than ever were committed on ſo ſmall a ſpot of Ground.

In the laſt *Obſervator* there was a miſtake of the 20th Proclamation inſtead of the 21.

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